



RACE TO THE TOP II

ACCELERATE MICHIGAN

Section B

**Michigan's
Students**

**Michigan's
Future**

608 W. Allegan Street
Lansing, MI 48933
www.mi.gov/mde

(B) Standards and Assessments

(B)(1) Developing and adopting common standards

(B)(1)(i) Participation in a consortium of states

Home of the first United States statewide achievement test, Michigan has a rich history of developing high-quality standards and assessments to evaluate student learning. Michigan has developed clear and rigorous content standards, including Grade Level Content Expectations for grades K-8 and High School Content Expectations for grades 9-12. The high school content expectations define the credit requirements of the Michigan Merit Curriculum, Michigan's high school graduation requirements, which are among the strongest in the nation, and represent Michigan's commitment to ensure that high school graduates are prepared for the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century.

Thus, as the United States reexamines the skills and knowledge that we value as a nation and develops common standards and assessments, Michigan is prepared and eager to collaborate, bringing its experiences and expertise to bear on a larger effort, while at the same time strengthening and developing our ability to improve student achievement. To this end, Michigan has joined three consortia: (1) the American Diploma Project Network, (2) the Common Core State Standards Initiative consortium, and (3) the Summative Multi-State Assessment Resources for Teachers and Educational Researchers (SMARTER) Balanced Assessment Consortium.

The American Diploma Project

Today, more than ever, Michigan appreciates the powerful role education at all levels plays in the success of its citizens and its economy. In 2005, the state, under the direction of Governor Jennifer Granholm and the Cherry Commission, set a goal of doubling the number of people in Michigan who receive postsecondary degrees over the next ten years. As one of the 35 states that have signed on to this project, we acknowledge that today's youth must receive the education and skills necessary to enter a postsecondary institution with the ability to learn and to later enter the workforce with the confidence to excel. Along with the National Governor's Association and Achieve's American Diploma Project, Michigan is committed to strengthening and improving its high schools to this end and has developed a plan to meet American Diploma Project's four objectives (see Appendix B.1).

Common Core State Standards Consortium

Governor Granholm, the State Board of Education, the Michigan Department of Education, and the Legislature, in coordination with education partners, are fully committed to the adoption of the Common Core State Standards, including the College and Career Readiness Standards and the Common Core K-12 Standards, which will be internationally benchmarked and research-based standards (see Appendices B.2, B.3, B.4, B.5 for supporting documentation of the consortium, international benchmarking, and participating states).

The Summative Multi-State Assessment Resources for Teachers and Educational Researchers (SMARTER) Balanced Assessment Consortium

Michigan is committed to serving the Summative Multi-State Assessment Resources for Teachers and Educational Researchers Balanced Assessment Consortium as a governing state and to implementing the assessments in both English language arts and mathematics. Appendix B.6 displays the number of states committed to the Summative Multi-State Assessment Resources for Teachers and Educational Researchers Balanced consortium and their anticipated roles through the process of responding to the United States Department of Education Race to the Top Assessment Competition.

(B)(1)(ii) Adopting a common set of K-12 Standards

Current Standards

Michigan is experienced in the process of adopting standards, and thus well positioned to mobilize the collective capacity of the entire education system when adopting the Common Core State Standards. Indeed, we have a historic commitment to standards-based education. Beginning in 1976, the Michigan Core Academic Standards were legislated and included the standards, benchmarks and content expectations that students should know and be able to do in core subjects by the end of each grade and at the end of high school. These were supplemented by the Michigan Curriculum Framework in 1995, and grade level standards and content expectations were completed in 2007. (We note as well that faculty in our leading research universities participated in both the development of state and then national standards, another indicator of Michigan's capacity to lead, implement, and revise educational reform.)

The adoption of the Common Core State Standards provides an opportunity for Michigan to build upon its momentum in implementing increasingly rigorous, internationally benchmarked, and evidenced based standards. In 2006, Michigan implemented the Michigan Merit Curriculum, which increased the number and rigor of credits needed to earn a high-school diploma and ensured that a diploma earned in Michigan guarantees that the student is well-prepared for postsecondary education and the workforce. In 2007, Michigan Department of Education completed revisions of content standards and content expectations in four content areas and developed course credit guidelines for all Michigan Merit Curriculum components (See Appendices B.7 and B.8). Additional standards approved by the State Board of Education (SBE) include the Michigan Educational Technology Standards and Expectations, Career Cluster Standards for Career and Technical Education Programs, and the Career and Employability Skills Content Standards and Benchmarks. Michigan is a pioneer in early childhood standards, adopting the Early Childhood Standards of Quality. Michigan is currently in the process of updating standards and content expectations for visual, performing and applied arts (e.g., music, theater, visual arts, etc.), in collaboration with institutions of higher education and national content organizations, and has already developed, as part of college and career readiness agenda, guidance for standards and content in these areas. Other non-Common Core content areas such as health, physical education, on-line learning experiences have recently been updated or developed.

In sum, not only does our past history demonstrate an appetite for the development and use of standards, but it also suggests our capacity to implement such standards in timely ways.

State plan to support adoption of Common Core State Standards

To accelerate the adoption of the Common Core Standards, Michigan has reviewed the Common Core Standards for consistency with the Michigan's standards and content expectations in mathematics and English language (see Appendices B.9 and B.10). In addition, to develop statewide understanding and readiness for the Common Core Standards, we have also:

- Invited comment on the draft Common Core Standards from statewide stakeholders, including local education agencies, public school academies (charter schools), intermediate school districts, and professional organizations via a web-based survey

- Presented draft Common Core Standards and analysis of their consistency with Michigan's standards and content expectations to the State Board of Education (see Appendix B.11);
- Provided a written overview of the Common Core State Standards Initiative to the Michigan House and Senate Education Committee Chairpersons and invited feedback via the web-based survey;
- Analyzed survey feedback;
- Developed plans to create a common set of state-level indicators captured in the Statewide Longitudinal Data System by which policymakers and education leaders can gauge the successful implementation of these standards, such as increases in student proficiency, increased graduation rates, decreased dropout rates, increasingly rigorous course-taking, and increased postsecondary education attendance and persistence

Michigan has also developed a process and timeline for the adoption of the Common Core Standards (see Appendices B.12 and B.13). The legal process for adopting standards in Michigan requires approval by the State Board of Education (Section 380.1278 Revised School Code; see Appendix B.14). The Common Core Standards will be presented to the State Board of Education for consideration in June, 2010. The Michigan Department of Education will submit an amendment to this application to United States Department of Education no later than June 30, 2010, providing evidence of the State Board of Education's adoption of the Common Core Standards.

While Michigan has made significant progress toward the adoption of the Common Core Standards, this application is critical in that it will help Michigan accelerate progress toward full adoption and most importantly, toward increased student achievement through implementation of these rigorous common standards throughout Michigan's education system. To fully implement common standards, the state must:

- Align the Common Core Standards to state and local assessments;
- Align the Common Core Standards to career and technical education programs, teacher competency tests and teacher preparation programs, and programs administered by the department, including early childhood education programs,

special education programs, English language learner programs, bilingual and migrant education programs, and Title I programs;

- Develop and disseminate instructional support materials, as described in Section B(3) and D(5); and
- Develop and deliver professional development programs.

These activities require that all aspects of this proposal (standards, assessments, teacher and administrator preparation and professional development, school improvement, and school and teacher/administrator evaluation) be aligned with and focused on these standards. The interconnections between these aspects of our reform are highlighted in each of the following sections.

A key purpose of the above activities is to provide assistance to Local Education Agencies in the incorporation of the Common Core Standards into instruction, professional development, and school and personnel evaluation. Race to the Top funds will help Michigan continue its momentum by supporting these efforts to focus the collective capacity of the entire system on the same goal: increasing student achievement while closing all achievement gaps.

(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments

Michigan has been a leader in large-scale assessment practices for decades, implementing the country's first statewide achievement test in 1969 (the Michigan Educational Assessment Program) and designing the first alternate assessment program for students with significant cognitive difficulties that includes the ability to measure student growth in the same manner as its general assessments. As Michigan adopts the Common Core Standards, and continues to refine content expectations, Race to the Top offers an important opportunity for us to harness the momentum in the assessment system to provide increasingly high-quality student achievement data, to assess our children and to inform the improvement of our system. The development and implementation of common, high-quality assessments to support Michigan's new legislation, which will also support annual educator evaluations; see Section D(2), includes: (1) Common Core Standards-related assessments, and (2) non-Common Core area assessments.

Assessments alone will not help. It is imperative that any assessment system be accompanied with high quality training in the selection, use, and analysis of data yielded for parents, teachers, and administrators. Michigan's plan to provide support around the use of

assessments and assessment data is provided in D(5), as we believe these activities occur in support of Great Teachers and Leaders, and not in support of assessments. Information is also provided in B(3) regarding how the state will support the fair and effective use of these instruments by local educators.

Developing and implementing common, high quality assessments for the Common Core.

As a governing state, Michigan will lead the development and implementation of the next generation of large-scale assessments through participation in the Summative Multi-State Assessment Resources for Teachers and Educational Researchers Balanced Assessment Consortium. The Consortium prioritizes assessments that are grounded in a thoughtfully integrated learning system of standards, curriculum, assessment, instruction and teacher development; and that

- Include evidence of actual student performance on challenging tasks tied to standards;
- Involve teachers integrally in the design, development and scoring of assessments;
- Are structured to continuously improve teaching and learning.

In addition, the Consortium plans to build a system of assessments that includes (1) common summative and interim benchmark tests in English language arts and mathematics; (2) formative assessment processes, tools, and supports; (3) focused professional development; (4) reporting systems that provide first-hand evidence of student performance; and (5) using technology to deliver the assessments and provide results as quickly as possible to teachers and parents. As outlined in Section D(2), this type of assessment system is critical to support the successful implementation of Michigan's collaboratively developed Framework for Educator Evaluations.

Michigan will fully collaborate with the Summative Multi-State Assessment Resources for Teachers and Educational Researchers Balanced Consortium states to classify the Common Core Standards according to depth-of-knowledge rankings to guarantee that corresponding assessments contain comparable proportions of items. The consortium work also entails ensuring that each assessment is fully aligned to college and career readiness standards and benchmarks; is vertically articulated in a manner that validity permits reliable indicators of student growth to be calculated; and that the content and scaling of assessment in adjacent grades are aligned in order to provide cogent information that informs instruction. The assessments will be internationally benchmarked in ways that are coherent and transparent, and will draw, in part, on

the capacity of faculty at our Research I Institutions. Because these scholars are nationally and internationally recognized, this means that the work will involve collaborations with experts at other institutions around the world. The development of the Michigan K-8 mathematics standards is an example: mathematicians deeply invested in mathematics education reform helped develop and critically review the emergent standards. The infrastructure is in place for continuing such work.

Michigan believes that focusing its resources on one coherent consortium-based effort will result in the highest quality assessments for students, as well as the greatest opportunity for stakeholder involvement, investment, and eventual adoption. Michigan is dedicated to leading this consortium by repurposing the time and energy of staff in the Office of Educational Assessment and Accountability so they may actively participate on the consortium's steering committee, proposal design team, and working groups. Michigan is positioned to take the lead in composing all ancillary materials and documenting the technical components of all Consortium assessments. The Office Educational Assessment & Accountability has developed a powerful new item development and banking system and has fully staffed Composition and Psychometric Units. Michigan has offered these attributes to the Summative Multi-State Assessment Resources for Teachers and Educational Researchers Balanced Consortium to utilize existing resources efficiently and will ensure that these assets are included in the response to the Race to the Top Assessment Competition. In this way, Michigan utilizes its existing collective capacity to support multi-state efforts while developing the foundation for the sustainability of the reforms laid out here.

Michigan is eagerly anticipating the announcement of competitive grants for alternate assessments and English language proficiency assessments based on the Common Core Standards. Such assessments are crucial to our state and to national efforts to meet the educational needs of students with disabilities and English language learners.

Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments in non-Common Core areas.

For those content areas, grades, and/or specialty areas not addressed by the Common Core Standards, Michigan will undertake a three-pronged approach to the development of summative, formative, and interim benchmark assessments:

- Michigan, along with education associations and organizations, will convene content referent groups to assist in the identification of appropriate evidence that can be used in the Framework for Educator Evaluations, in addition to the balanced assessments,
- Michigan, in collaboration with the education associations and organizations, will use Race to the Top funds to provide seed money to consortia of local and intermediate school districts and institutions of higher education to convene content-based teams in order to develop summative, benchmark, and formative measures for local, statewide, and national use; and
- Michigan will expand its current efforts to include all teachers in the professional development training in formative assessment and balanced assessment (as outlined in greater detail in Section D5).

Race To The top is an exciting opportunity to provide seed money to consortia of intermediate school districts, local education agencies, and institutions of higher education to develop standards and assessments in areas traditionally not assessed by statewide assessment; to more intensely focus the development, administration, and utilization of assessments at the local level rather than solely at the state level; and to develop a much wider variety of assessment data that provides critical information on the performance and growth of students. Local ownership of assessments will increase both “buy in” and understanding. Finally, expanding assessments to other domains of content and other forms of evidence is essential: otherwise, educational opportunities for our children will be narrowed instead of expanded.

High-quality assessment data will be fed into the Statewide Longitudinal Data System and the Regional Data Initiatives in order to provide information regarding student growth, as well as important data for the annual educator evaluations described in Part D(2). Our goal is to create a statewide culture of data use. This is a natural next step in Michigan, since we already have built statewide collective capacity to develop and use standards and assessments. Still, a culture of data use requires robust instruments and a robust system of varied data.

(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments.

Gaining momentum on improving student achievement will also require targeted professional development, which will be provided via Michigan’s Responsive Educational Support System (RESPONSE). The key to RESPONSE is that it is a *mechanism* to continuously

improve instructional practice through an iterative system of instruction based on standards, high-quality assessments, research and analysis, and targeted professional development. To support the standards and assessment components of RESPONSE, there are four key activities: (1) rolling out standards; (2) aligning standards with postsecondary expectations; (3) providing instructional practices, tools, and assessments; and (4) providing targeted resources and professional development to improve all teachers' capacity to teach the standards which form the backbone of state assessments.

1. Rolling out Enhanced Standards, Assessments, and Supporting Elements.

Roll-out of Common Core Standards and Assessments

Michigan's current capacity includes extensive experience with the adoption, implementation, and roll-out of standards and assessments, in the form of both knowledge of how to do these things and the infrastructures to support these activities. We will tap into these resources to facilitate the roll-out of the Common Core Standards. Michigan will announce the adoption of the Common Core Standards and dates and locations of roll-out sessions in June 2010. These sessions, to be held in October of 2010, will provide an overview of the Common Core Standards and plans for assessment, highlight the importance of building collaborative networks, and focus primarily on the implementation support provided through RESPONSE. The roll-outs and other appropriate professional development will be repeated yearly, highlighting new assessments and instructional materials, and inviting on-going feedback to improve the tools and the system.

Roll-out of enhanced standards and assessments in non-Common Core areas and specialty areas.

Building on our extensive experience in developing standards and assessments in traditionally difficult to assess areas, the state will support the development of standards and assessments described in Section B(2) in non-common core areas and will include all teachers in the formative assessment and balanced assessment training.

2. Alignment of the Enhanced Standards with Postsecondary Transition.

Alignment of Common Core Standards with postsecondary transition

The Michigan Merit Curriculum outlines the credit requirements for Michigan high school graduation and is recognized as among the most rigorous requirements in the nation. An initial evaluation by Michigan Department of Education content specialists has determined that the draft Common Core Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies and Science and the draft Common Core Standards for Mathematics are consistent with the Michigan Merit Curriculum requirements. The P-20 Council, whose membership includes faculty, deans, and administrators from various state institutions of higher learning, will examine the consistency of the Michigan Merit Curriculum credits as defined by the High School Content Expectations and the Common Core Standards, with college entrance and placement requirements and will make recommendations for continued implementation support.

Alignment of non-Common Core Standards to support postsecondary transition

The activities of the P-20 Council will be extended to investigate the content standards and assessments in non-common core areas and to make recommendations regarding the extent to which those standards prepare students for college entrance and placement requirements. Representatives from the state's institutions of higher education will play a key role in the development of standards and assessments in non-common core areas, and especially in those that have not been traditionally assessed by the state (i.e., the arts, music, etc.).

3. Development and Dissemination of Instructional Materials, Practices and Assessments

The materials, practices, and assessments critical to support and inform classroom instruction are provided in four ways 1) the Teaching for Learning website, 2) the use of instructional surveys, 3) the provision of model instructional units, and 4) the implementation of balanced assessment. And as we have noted, all instructional and assessment materials require related professional development to support their successful use, a point we return to in Section D(5).

Teaching for Learning website

Michigan Department of Education has developed the Teaching for Learning Framework to assist educators in understanding rigorous standards and in developing the ability to teach

those standards so that all students learn and demonstrate proficiency (see Appendix B.16). The Teaching for Learning website will be used to deliver content such as instructional materials, classroom strategies, and examples of formative assessments produced by statewide consortia (see Section B(2) and Section D(5)). The content of the Teaching for Learning website will be collected, designed, and created by workgroups convened by Michigan Department of Education, which will include expert teachers from all content areas and grade levels, Intermediate School District curriculum specialists and consultants, and content area specialists from partner organizations (e.g., Math and Science Centers Network, Regional Literacy Training Centers, Michigan Reading Association). The website will be launched in summer 2010. Finally, while the website will be an important tool for the provision of resources, the *implementation* of these resources must be supported by job-embedded professional development such as instructional coaching. These supports are detailed in Section D(5). However, as teachers learn in many different ways, the ability of the Teaching for Learning website to offer “just in time” support is a crucial piece of our ability to develop statewide instructional capacity.

As such, the website will serve as a clearinghouse for nationally, state, and locally generated support materials and will integrate with educator Individualized Professional Development Plans – see Sections C(3) and D(5) – critical to the implementation of the Framework for Educator Evaluations. It will include teacher-teacher collaboration via Web 2.0/social networking functionality, and will provide opportunities for guest educators to contribute content and interact with users. The Teaching for Learning Framework will also be a tool for informing and shaping teacher and leader preparation, certification, and evaluation programs, as the Teaching for Learning website content will be aligned with the Professional Standards for Michigan Teacher and with the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium Standards for administrator certification – see Section D(1) for more detail.

Instructional surveys will be designed to help educators evaluate their own levels of proficiency in each Teaching for Learning domain, and identify and select individualized professional development. The surveys will be designed for formative development of, and reflection on, effective use of instructional skills, either individually or in teams, and will serve as one piece of evidence to be used to self-assess instructional skills. These surveys are instructional tools that help to determine how well any instructional practice is implemented in the classroom and to assist in the setting of personal goals for improving practice. While the state

will not mandate these for use by districts and schools, and will, in fact make them publicly available on the Teaching for Learning website, these surveys can be one of the measures utilized to measure individualized goal under the Framework for Educator Evaluation. The surveys will be available online as part of the Teaching for Learning website beginning in December 2010.

Model instructional units will also be developed and made available on the Teaching for Learning website to provide ready-to-use classroom lessons that demonstrate implementation of rigorous, internationally benchmarked standards and assessments. Using data from state and national assessments, as well as local assessments and educator feedback, model instructional units will be developed under the leadership of the Michigan Department of Education Office of Education Improvement and Innovation to help teachers deliver instruction for particularly difficult content standards. The model instructional units will include long-term plans and daily lesson plans to assist teachers in planning and delivering instruction; the units will be drawn from the most current research on effective instructional practices in content areas. All schools will have access to these units; however, the lowest five percent of schools identified for restructuring will be offered additional support in their implementation including professional development and instructional coaching.

Development and Dissemination of Balanced Assessments

A balanced assessment system must include three components: (1) formative assessments, a planned process in which assessment-elicited evidence of students' status is used by teachers to adjust ongoing instruction or by students to adjust their learning; (2) interim benchmark assessments, periodic summative assessments that occur at regular intervals for the purpose of tracking student progress; and (3) summative assessments, final measures of student achievement (see Appendix B.17 and B.18). Like all other aspects of this proposal, the successful implementation of any system of balanced assessment must be supported with extensive professional development, both in terms of how to design assessments, as well as how to effectively use the assessment data in conjunction with other data to make informed decisions regarding instruction and professional development – see Section D(5).

An unintended and unfortunate consequence of the present focus on sanctions-based accountability informed by summative assessment results is that current assessment and

accountability systems are not balanced. The summative assessments, for the most part, do not integrate supports for improving instruction, which is a critical component of Accelerating Michigan. It is crucial that we create a system with greater balance if we are to improve student achievement. Thus, in the RESPONSE system, assessments work as *one* component of improving instruction and targeting professional development, and the work related to assessments is supported at all levels of the system with structural supports and appropriate professional development.

In January 2010, Michigan signed into law the requirement that evaluations of all teachers and leaders include student growth as a factor. To implement fair and valid educator evaluations, a Framework for Educator Evaluations has been developed by the Michigan Education Association, the American Federation of Teachers, the Michigan Association of Secondary School Principals, and the Michigan Elementary and Middle School Principals Association, revised collaboratively with a group of stakeholders, and endorsed by the Michigan Department of Education. The collaborative process involved in the development of this Framework is detailed in Section D(2), along with specific details regarding the structure and key components.

The Framework for Educator Evaluations outlines a process by which educators identify goals and then identify appropriate measures of obtaining those goals. The Framework specifies that state assessment data and/or measures of student growth should be utilized *whenever appropriate and available*. To this end, it is vitally important that Michigan continue efforts to develop a balanced assessment system that includes high-quality assessments in as many content areas as possible, in order to provide these data to the field to help inform instruction and support teachers in identifying areas of student need in terms of achievement.

Through our collaboration in the SMARTER Balanced Consortium, Michigan will leverage the human and material capital necessary to develop this extensive system of summative, interim benchmark, and formative instruments in Common Core Standards areas. However, given our commitment to develop assessments in non-Common Core Standards areas, we will also do statewide work to develop assessments appropriate for students, teachers and leaders in the non-common core areas as well.

Michigan's current assessment system does not provide a measure of student growth in high school as only grade 11 is tested. It is anticipated that the SMARTER Balanced

Consortium, or another consortium responding to Category B of the Race to the Top Assessment Competition, will develop high school assessments based on the Common Core Standards. However, as these assessments will not be available until 2014-15, Michigan will use RTT funds to purchase commercially available measures of aligned, college-ready assessments for four years. The state will work with the assessment vendor to ensure that the tests are appropriate for use as part of teacher and leader evaluations, conduct research on instrument validity, and align the tests to Michigan's assessments in grades 3-8 in Reading and Mathematics. This will allow Local Education Agencies and the Michigan Department of Education to generate growth data in all Michigan high schools that is aligned to college and career readiness benchmarks in order to meet the evaluation requirements found in the new state legislation. Data from these instruments will be included in teacher and leader evaluations as locally bargained.

To ensure that the state-administered assessments are fair and provide accurate measurement and comparison when used in educator evaluation, Michigan Department of Education will: (1) use the existing assessment system that has been approved by the United States Department of Education and implemented by Office of Educational Assessment and Accountability to provide annual summative measures of student achievement in reading and in mathematics in grades 3-8 and 11, from spring 2010 to the 2014-2015 school year; (2) transition to annual summative assessments in the Common Core Standards content areas provided by the SMARTER Balanced Consortium as those assessments are developed and validated for use, beginning in 2014-2015; (3) adopt interim benchmark assessments developed by the SMARTER Balanced Consortium in English language arts and mathematics in 2014-2015; and (4) use a phased approach to develop annual summative and interim benchmark assessments in subject, grades, subject/grade combinations, and/or educator roles not addressed in the current assessment system. At the same time, we will collaborate in developing high-quality assessments through consortiums of intermediate school districts and institutions of higher education in non-Common Core areas described in B(2) and also will support the efforts undertaken in support of the Framework for Educator Evaluation described in Section D(2). Once consortia have developed assessments in non-common core areas, the Michigan Department of Education will validate them in collaboration with Local Educational Agencies, intermediate school districts, and institutions of higher education, making them available to other schools and districts for use in measuring student achievement and growth in all subjects.

In sum, our goal is to create a balanced system of assessments that includes national, state and locally developed assessments, and to create a process by which those assessments are regularly validated and improved, in order to enact a model systemic data system that uses multiple assessments. All data will be entered in the Statewide Longitudinal Data System, via the Regional Data Warehouses – see C(3) – and this system will be used by RESPONSE, by teacher preparation institutions, by evaluators and researchers measuring program effectiveness, and by schools. As already noted, a culture of data use requires good data, and it also requires providing access to those data to multiple stakeholders so that they might use analysis of data to quickly improve their part of the educational system.

The hybrid approach described above builds on Michigan’s strengths, including extensive prior experience in assessments, the power of locally determined teams and goals, strong involvement from institutions of higher education, and a robust Statewide Longitudinal Data System and Regional Data Warehouse Initiative. Race to the Top provides an important opportunity for Michigan to combine and accelerate all of these initiatives in support of improved student achievement via an increased focus on instructional practice, and to develop a strong culture of data around informing instruction, evaluation, and professional development.

4. Development and Implementation of High-Quality Professional Development.

Michigan’s coherent plan for professional development described in section D(5) outlines Michigan’s four priorities for professional development: (1) improving instructional practice, (2) using data to drive decision making and improve instruction, (3) increasing assessment literacy and (4) collaboration with the state education associations and organizations in the training of all educators on the Framework for Educator Evaluation. The professional development most relevant to the work of standards and assessments (Section B) is 1) professional development to improve instructional practice and 2) increase assessment literacy. Again, the state is shifting from focusing on the *content* to be taught to the *strategies and tools* necessary to most effectively teach that content. The state will identify current high-quality professional development that focuses on improving instruction and will design new programs to fill in “gaps” in the existing services. The state will also provide professional development to train teachers in how to use a system of balanced assessments to measure progress toward the goals outlined by the standards, and how to use the data from those assessments to provide critical information so that teachers

can improve their own instructional practice. See Section D(5) for complete description of all professional development activities.

Most importantly, RESPONSE provides a mechanism by which the state can be responsive, and can target resources and supports to those districts, schools, and teachers who need them most. The professional development activities outlined above will be available and utilized by all educators, but through the continuous use of data to assess areas of need, the resources will be targeted where it appears teachers, schools, districts, or Intermediate School Districts require the strongest levels of support in standards and assessment, which include instructional support, as well as intensive training in the effective use of assessments. The state must to be able to respond effectively and support fully the needs of schools, districts and teachers, and to provide this support at levels most appropriate to the given situation.

Importantly, to continue to facilitate the shift of the state from a compliance role to a supportive role, the state will use this opportunity to train and support intermediate school districts, districts, and schools in developing high-quality professional development that is most appropriate for their school/district and/or Intermediate School Districts, and will serve as a resource for these initiatives. The state will not *develop* the professional development for all 57 Intermediate School Districts, but rather will use resources to undertake activities such as convening working groups, providing seed money, and providing technical assistance where appropriate, and in areas of need as identified by RESPONSE. Section D(5) provides greater detail regarding Michigan's coherent plan for professional development.

Key Partnerships for Standards and Assessments in Support of RESPONSE

Michigan recognizes the importance of developing valid and reliable state assessment tools essential to informing schools on the status of student achievement and growth, but not at the expense of assisting teachers in improving their knowledge, skills, and dispositions. Recognizing that it is teachers who teach students, every effort will be given to assisting teachers in the improvement of their professional practice. This Michigan effort is devoted as equally to accurate assessment of student knowledge as it is to improving daily classroom instruction.

The P-20 Council will be comprised of leaders from various Michigan Department of Education departments (including the Office of Education Improvement and Innovation, the Office of Early Childhood Education and Family Services, the Office of Educational Assessment

and Accountability, the Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services, and the Office of Career and Technical Education), state institutions of higher learning (including four-year colleges and universities and community colleges), intermediate school districts, local education agencies, and various other stakeholders to represent the spectrum of needs and experiences of students on the pathway from K–12 to college and beyond. To facilitate improvement in the four assurance areas, the P–20 Council will recommend policy specific to curriculum, instruction, and school improvement initiatives to promote the closing of achievement gaps and attainment of postsecondary success. The P–20 Council also will be active in the development and application of the Statewide Longitudinal Data System to promote the public reporting of effectiveness data on all institutions responsible for the public education of students from pre-kindergarten through college. This reporting will ensure that all institutions continuously improve their effectiveness in preparing students for success at the next level, as well as provide parents and students with the information to make informed decisions about where and how students receive instruction. This data has the potential to sustain effective institutions and to force ineffective institutions into restructuring or the cessation of operation.

Intermediate school districts and regional networks or consortia of intermediate school districts will develop, disseminate, and implement high-quality instructional materials, assessments, and high-quality professional development. All intermediate school districts, through existing regional data systems, will provide, at least annually, data regarding their implementation of the RESPONSE to stakeholders, including Michigan Department of Education. Intermediate school districts will formally join the process of adoption and transition to the Common Core State Standards through a signed Memorandum of Understanding. . The Memorandum of Understanding engages the intermediate school districts via a grant process for the development of RESPONSE resources.

The Math and Science Centers Network and Michigan Virtual University will assist teachers in targeted high-need local education agencies and struggling schools in integrating Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) content across disciplines to prepare students to be globally competitive in Science Technology Engineering Math fields of study – see Section B(3) below. Michigan’s Regional Literacy Training Centers will help develop, disseminate, and implement English Language Arts instructional materials, assessments, and professional development targeted at high-need students and struggling

schools. Career and Technical Education will also assist in developing instructional programs in Science Technology Engineering Math areas in collaboration with math/science teachers. This adds relevance and context to the curriculum. Rigorous math and science content will be embedded into the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics instructional programs, such as pre-engineering, mechatronics, alternative fuels, and new and emerging Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics areas. The Early Childhood Investment Corporation, Offices of Early Childhood Education and Family Services, Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services, and partnering intermediate school districts and organizations will collaborate with Michigan Department of Education to enrich the quality of resources available to all students from birth to postsecondary education.